

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

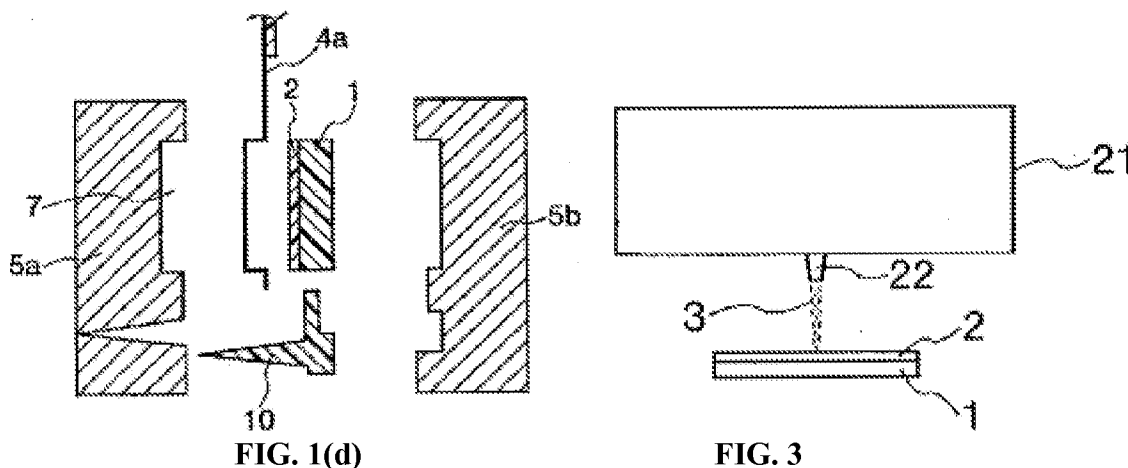
Claims 1-3 and 5-6 are amended by this response. Claims 4 and 7-12 are canceled; no claims are added. Upon entry of this response, claims 1-3, and 5-6 will remain pending.

In a telephone conference on October 2, 2008, the Examiner issued an oral restriction requirement between Group I, method claims 1-6 and Group II, device claims 7-12. At that time, Applicant orally elected the Group I claims, and by this response affirms this election in writing without traverse. The non-elected claims 7-12 are accordingly canceled without prejudice to filing of a divisional application drawn thereto.

The reference listed in the specification were not considered by the Examiner because the reference was not been submitted in an information disclosure statement (IDS). Accordingly, an IDS listing the references is being submitted with this response.

Figure 1 of the drawings is objected to as allegedly not being consistent with claim 1. Claim 1 has now been amended to incorporate the elements of claim 4 in a manner consistent with Figure 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully declines at this time, to amend the drawings.

Embodiments of the present invention relate to method for manufacturing card. The particular embodiment of FIG 1(d) (reproduced below) shows a card base 1 with ink receiving layer 2 joined together after molding, and taken out of a cavity 7.



As shown in FIG. 3 (reproduced above), after the card base 1 with the ink receiving layer 2 is taken out, printing is applied to the ink receiving layer 2 by an ink jet printer 21.

Accordingly, claim 1 has now been amended to recite as follows:

1. A method for manufacturing a card comprising:
 - a step of forming a transfer sheet by directly forming an ink receiving layer on a base material sheet;
 - a step of inserting a transfer sheet into a cavity of a metal mold in a state where a surface of said ink receiving layer faces a room of said metal mold into which an injection-molding resin is injected;
 - a step of molding a card base by injecting an injection-molding resin into said cavity in a state where said transfer sheet is disposed in said cavity, and at the same time joining said ink receiving layer to said card base;
 - a step of taking out said card base joined by said ink receiving layer from said cavity;
 - a step of peeling said base material sheet from said transfer sheet in a manner that said ink receiving layer is left on said card base; and
 - a step of performing printing to said ink receiving layer by an ink-jet printer after said card base is taken out from said cavity. (Emphasis added)

The claims stand rejected either as anticipated by Japanese Patent Publication No. JP 411028856A to Yamaoka (“the Yamaoka Publication”), or as obvious in view of the Yamaoka Publication combination with another reference. These claim rejections are traversed as follows.

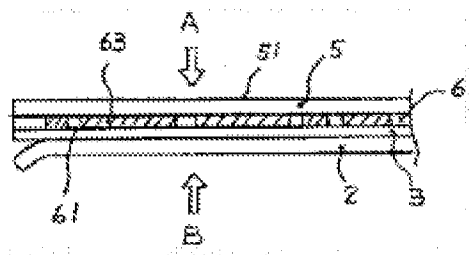
As a threshold matter, the Examiner is respectfully reminded that some of the claims stand rejected as anticipated, and not merely obvious, in view of the Yamaoka Publication:

[t]he distinction between rejections based on 35 U.S.C. 102 and those based on 35 U.S.C. 103 should be kept in mind. Under the former, the claim is anticipated by the reference. No question of obviousness is present. In other words, for anticipation under 35 U.S.C. 102, the reference must teach every aspect of the claimed invention either explicitly or impliedly. Any feature not directly taught must be inherently present. (Emphasis added; MPEP 706.2)

Here, the Yamaoka Publication fails to teach a step of performing printing to an ink receiving layer of a card base by an ink jet printer after the card base is taken out from a cavity.

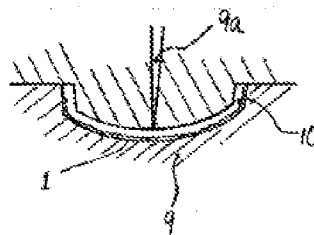
In the latest office action, the Examiner concludes that the Yamaoka Publication allegedly teaches that after a card base is taken out from a cavity, printing is applied to an ink receiving layer on the card base. Applicant respectfully disagrees, as the Yamaoka Publication discloses that a resin-molded product and a transfer sheet are concurrently formed. There is no description as to the printing process.

Drawing 2 (reproduced below) of the Yamaoka Publication shows a substrate sheet 2, a peeling layer 3, an ink receiving layer 6 and an adhesive layer 5 forming a transfer sheet:



Paragraph [0007] of the Yamaoka Publication describes that the adhesive layer 5 is constructed by subsequent processing that takes place after the printing performed by an ink jet printer.

Then, as shown in Drawing 5 (reproduced below):



the adhesive layer 5 is attached to an injection molding metal die 9, with adhesive layer surface 51 being oriented to gate 9a of the injection molding metal die 9, and the injection molding is performed.

Other passages from the Yamaoka Publication, further confirm this process with molding after printing. For example, ¶[0023] describes that (a worker) performs prints to the sheet by an ink jet printer, and forms an adhesive layer on the sheet and sets the sheet on the molding die. In addition, ¶[0027] describes that (a worker) prints to the sheet a color scenery image by an ink jet printer, forms an adhesive layer of vinyl acetate group on the upper surface of the sheet, forms a transfer sheet, attaches this transfer sheet, attaches this transfer sheet to the metal die, and performs the injection molding.

Accordingly, it is apparent that the Yamaoka Publication lacks any teaching either explicit or implied, of a step of performing printing to an ink receiving layer of a card base by an ink jet printer after the card base is taken out from a cavity.

Regarding Japanese Patent Publication No. JP 02001239779A to Aoki et al. ("the Aoki Publication") further relied upon by the Examiner, that reference also fails to teach or suggest all of the claim elements. In particular, the Aoki Publication fails to teach that after a base is taken out of a cavity, printing is applied to an ink receiving layer.

In view of the failure of the art relied upon by the Examiner to teach or suggest all of the elements of the pending claims, it is respectfully asserted that no conclusion of anticipation or obviousness can reasonably be drawn. Continued maintenance of the claim rejections is accordingly improper, and the rejections should be withdrawn.

Based upon the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

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